

# MYSTERIES UNEARTHED

## BLACK OBELISK OF SHALMANESER III also known as “THE JEHU” STELE WA118885

The black obelisk was carved and erected by Shalmaneser III (858-824 BC) in the central building of his palace at Calah (now Nimrud). It is a complete, large four-sided imposing monument of black marble, 2 metres high and tapering at the top. It has 20 small bas-reliefs, 5 on each side showing officials from 5 different countries bringing tribute to the king.

Above, below and between the reliefs are 210 lines of cuneiform inscription which tell the story of the monarch's achievements in both war and peace during the first 31 years of his reign.

One of the relief pictures on the 2<sup>nd</sup> row represents Jehu, king of Israel as kneeling before Shalmaneser to present his tribute. The cuneiform caption reads: “The tribute of Iaua mar Humri (Jehu, son of Omri).” It is the only picture of a Hebrew monarch so far discovered.

### Significance

The mention of 2 kings of the northern kingdom of Israel:- Omri and especially Jehu.

Ref. Omri - 1 Kings 16:16,25-28

Jehu - 2 Kings 9:14,20 “Jehu, son of Jehoshaphat”

This obelisk also mentions Hazael, king of Syria. Jehu and Hazael were the 2 of whom Elijah was commanded to anoint (1 Kings 19:15-18).

During the reign of Omri, Israel came to be known to the Assyrian as “the land of Omri,” therefore even Jehu, the extirpator of the house of Omri, is termed a “son of Omri”. (Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary vol. II p.810)

Because Jehu paid tribute to the king of Assyria, Jehu's ally, Hazael (king of Syria) made a destructive onslaught on Israel in revenge, for at the time, after Shalmanesar, there was a succession of weak kings for 40 years.

## CYRUS THE GREAT'S CLAY CYLINDER. WA 90920

This cylinder is inscribed in Babylonian cuneiform with an account by Cyrus (549-530BC), king of Persia, of his conquest of Babylon in 539 BC and his capture of Nabonidus, the last Babylonian king. In it he describes his new religious policy of toleration which reversed the old Babylonian policy of taking captive peoples and their gods. As this was the policy of Cyrus to all gods and peoples in Babylon, it is quite likely that the record of Ezra recording Cyrus's gracious dispensation to the Jews is quite authentic.

CYRUS CYLINDER	BIBLE RECORDS
(i) "(Marduk) scanned and looked (through) all the countries, searching for a righteous ruler willing to lead him... (Then) he pronounced the name of Cyrus, king of Anshan, declared him... to be(come) the ruler of all the world."	(i) Isaiah 45: 1,2 “Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him...I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight...”
(ii) “And he (Cyrus) did always endeavour to treat according to justice the black-headed whom he (Marduk) has made him conquer.” “My numerous troops walked around in Babylon in peace, I did not allow anybody to terrorise.”	(ii) Isaiah 45:13(a) “I have raised him (Cyrus) up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways...”

<p>"I brought relief to their dilapidated housing, putting; (thus) an end to their (main) complaints.          "I entered Babylon as a friend."</p>	
<p>(iii) "Without any battle, he made him (Cyrus) enter his town Babylon, sparing Babylon any calamity. He delivered into his (Cyrus's) hands Nabonidus, the king who did not worship him (Marduk)."</p>	<p>(iii) Daniel 5:1,28,30-31 "Belshazzar (Nabonidus's son) the king (2nd ruler) made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand" 'PERES: Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians'          "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom..."</p>
<p>(iv) "I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, legitimate king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four rims (of the earth)."</p>	<p>(iv) Dan. 10:1 "In the 3rd year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel..."</p>
<p>(v) "I returned to (these) sacred cities on the side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been ruins for a long time, the images which (used) to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I (also) gathered all their (former) inhabitants and returned (to them) their habitation. Furthermore, I resettled them...unharmd, in their (former) chapels, the places which make them happy."</p>	<p>(V) Isa.45:13(b) "He (Cyrus) shall build my city, <u>and he shall let go my captives</u>, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts."          Ezra 1:1-3 "Now on the first year of Cyrus king of Persia... that he made a proclamation ... saying, Thus said Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven ... hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem ... Who is there among you ... let him go up to Jerusalem ... and build the house of the Lord God of Israel ..."</p>

## ROCK OF BEHISTUN.

This rock found on the road between Baghdad and Teheran was a major factor in the decipherment of the CUNEIFORM script.

The inscriptions, 14 columns in all, were carved into rock 500 feet on a cliff face, with a sculpture of Darius the great, king of Persia.

The script is in 3 languages - Old Persian, Babylonian and Elamite and was meticulously copied by Sir Henry Rawlinson. Beginning with the Persian text and using the names of kings, like Darius, the cuneiform script began to give up its secrets, thus supplying the clue to all the rest. As you look at all the tablets written in cuneiform, remember it was as a result of this memorial that they are translated and give us light on the *OT*.